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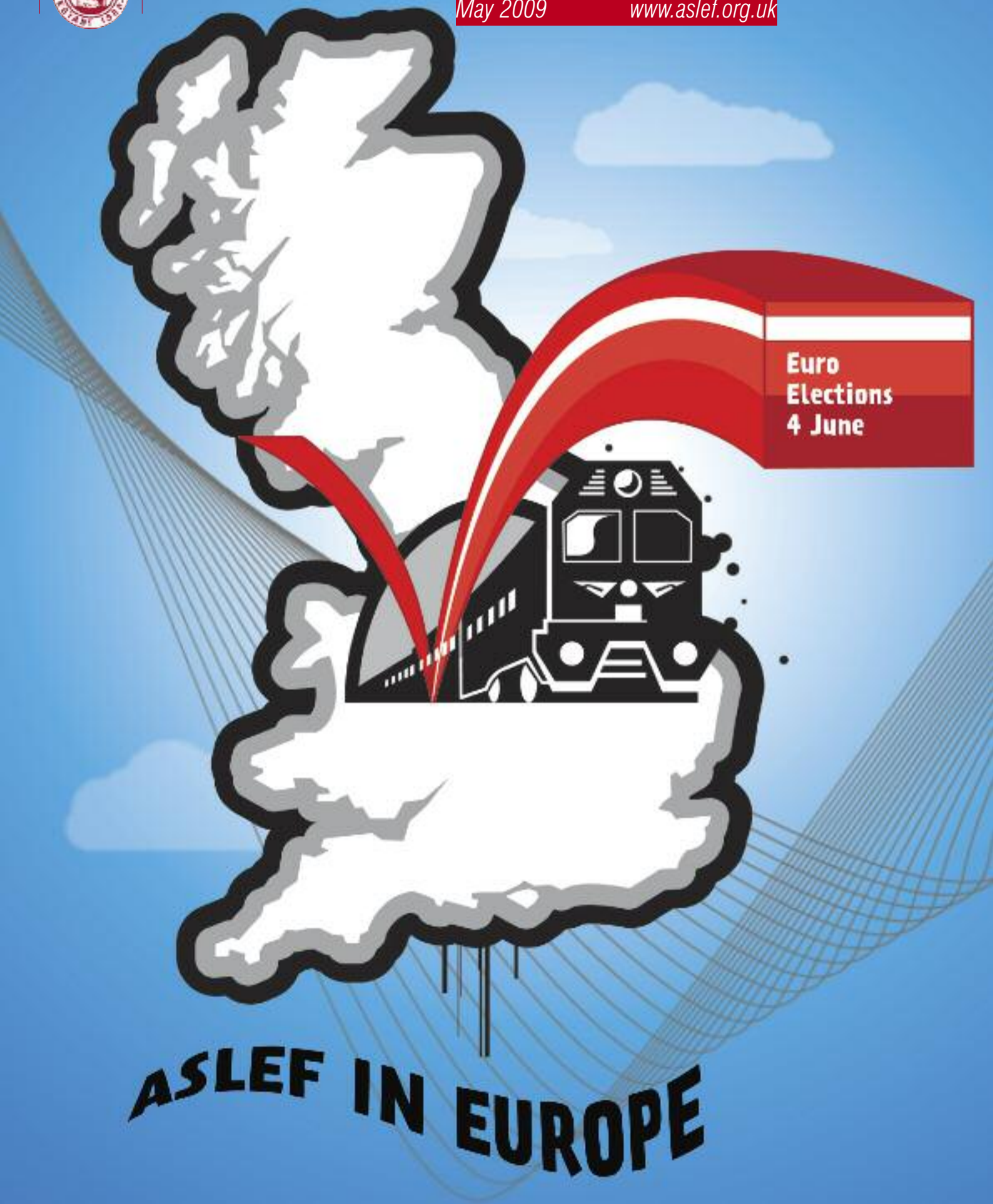

ASLEF IN EUROPE

COMMISSIONS UNDERTAKEN FOR ORIGINAL OIL PAINTINGS AT COMPETETIVE PRICES

ARTIST
Frederick James Taylor
Guild of Railway Artists (Assoc. Member)
Guild of Wiltshire Artists

These pictures of my work show samples of oil paintings produced from black/white and colour photos. If you have a favourite photo or locomotive that you would like painted specifically for you, then please contact me to discuss your requirements.

Although I specialize in painting trains, I also undertake a wide variety of other subjects including aircraft, portraits, animals, landscapes etc. To find out more about my work, please log on to my website.

9F at Willesden circa 1963

GWR Dean Class at Brinkworth

The Princess Royal

King Edward I

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the **ASLEF** Journal

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Cover: Niels van de Snepscheut and Ed van Bennekom at www.klatsch.nl

LESSONS FROM DRIVER MORGAN

I SET off from Head Office with a heavy heart on 7 April for an appointment I wished I didn't have to make. Along with the President Alan Donnelly I made my way to Worthing Crematorium where the funeral of Bob Morgan took place.

Bob's story has been told often in the pages of the Journal, from the tragic accident at Purley and his conviction and imprisonment for manslaughter to his name finally being cleared 14 years later at the High Courts of Justice.

Bob was the last man who should have had to face such unjust traumas. He loathed the publicity his case attracted and his relief was obvious when he told me, just a year ago, that 'it was finally over'. And now, with so little time passed since he was freed of the burden, he has died. He was just 66 when he drowned in a boating accident. He was last seen one late afternoon sailing on the River Medina off the Isle of Wight .

It is a deeply sad story, and perhaps the only people who can fully appreciate its tragedy are those who have driven trains themselves. People who know the dangers and the constant challenges of our profession. ASLEF members.

As I looked around the packed crematorium I saw driver after driver who had turned up to pay their last respects, united in a common fraternal bond. I was moved by the comradeship that we share. ASLEF is more than a union.

But we have never taken an insular view. We have always respected other trade unions and supported their struggles. In this 25th anniversary year of the miners' strike I have often recalled with pride the generosity, solidarity and friendship that ASLEF members showed for the miners during those dark days.

I was charged with taking money we collected each week to NUM offices and often met their inspiring South Wales president, Emlyn Williams. We collected money openly at our depots, but handed it over discretely in the pit villages. Welsh miners had too much pride to accept 'charity': but it wasn't charity we were offering. It was solidarity. We stood by them because they were our own.

It is memories like these that caused me to write so angrily in this column last month. It is an insult to the whole idea of trade unions for a so-called sister union to describe ASLEF with terms like 'club' and 'employer-friendly organisation'. And it is a condemnation of the TUC that it can allow such lies to be spread without a word of rebuke.

When other unions have the morality, solidarity, history and pride of our union, I will be content to take lessons from them. Until then, they would do well to learn from us.

KEITH NORMAN
GENERAL SECRETARY

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UNION: 'LESS MAINTENANCE COULD CLOSE RAIL NETWORK'

ASLEF's General Secretary has written to the heads of all UK train companies asking for their views on Network Rail's decision to cut back on track renewals and maintenance. The union's executive insists that if any accident occurs as a direct result of reduced maintenance routines 'train travel in Britain will come to a standstill'.

Keith has told train companies of his huge concern at Network Rail's admission that it plans 'huge reduction in track renewals expenditure' that it concedes 'will have a major impact on the supply chain' with '20% - 30% less heavy materials' resulting in 'supply chain redundancies'. Information released by a Network Rail whistleblower reveals that essential engineering work in almost 200 locations covering the Southern, Western and London to Crewe regions has been deferred - despite it having been agreed and placed with contractors last year.

'This irresponsible decision will have a direct and negative impact on the provision of passenger rail and freight services,' Keith says. 'It will also have a residual effect on a whole range of other industries such as quarrying and steel.'

ASLEF says that Network Rail's actions completely undermine government commitments to bring forward rail infrastructure projects to boost employment. 'Despite being responsible to the government and dependent on state subsidies, Network Rail's directors are creating a climate which will result in a hemorrhaging of jobs from the rail industry,' Keith declares.

The union is 'appalled' that Network Rail is prepared to cut the frequency of track inspections and routine signals maintenance on cost grounds. 'The cumulative effect of these measures – less maintenance and renewals – will be to significantly raise safety risks to passengers and industry employees.'

He warned of 'another Hatfield, Potters Bar or Grayrigg' and insisted that all ASLEF members would react instantly if this happened again. 'How many times do we need to learn the same lesson?' he demanded.

ASLEF has been lobbying transport ministers Geoff Hoon and Andrew Adonis, calling on them to ensure this essential rail renewal work is not deferred and to develop an industry-wide strategy to ensure that the railways can be managed to mitigate rather than exacerbate the effect of the downturn.

● See also the report of the meeting with transport minister Geoff Hoon on this subject on page 8

PASSENGER FOCUS COSTS £5.3 MILLION

Figures released last month by government minister Paul Clark reveal that consumer group Passenger Focus – 'an independent public body set up by the Government to protect the interests of Britain's rail passengers' – cost the taxpayer £5.315 million in 2007-08.

ASLEF LAW CHANGE

ASLEF's legal action against a BNP member was last month enshrined in law. Section 19 of the Employment Act 2008 states that a trade union has the right to expel or exclude an individual on the basis of their membership or former membership of a political party. These changes were introduced following a judgement of the European Court of Human Rights (ASLEF v UK).

ANYONE REMEMBER DRIVER J. SMITH?

We have been asked by rail enthusiast Les Wheeler if anyone has any information about Driver J. Smith. Les believes that this was the driver on the footplate of the very last steam engine carrying out normal duties – not steam specials - on BR.

He took the picture of Driver Smith and his engine at Preston station on 4 August 1968 and says, 'Interestingly, Driver Smith is not wearing the bib and braces one would expect him to be wearing but a uniform in-keeping with a diesel or electric loco driver.'

If anyone could help Les Wheeler with his enquiries, please give him a call on 01665 575 287.

GLASGOW TO OBAN BEST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD

Readers of Wanderlust magazine have voted the West Highland line from Glasgow to Oban 'Top Rail Journey in the World'. It won over such exotic competition as the Peruvian line from Cuzco to Macchu Picchu, the Trans-Siberian Railway, Eurostar, the Canadian 'Rocky Mountaineer' and the Orient Express.

TRAIN AGE SHOWS NEED FOR LONG-TERM PLANNING

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has reported that the age of rolling stock has reached a five-year high. ASLEF general secretary Keith Norman says this is further proof that franchising fails to provide any long-term planning for the industry. 'Franchises only consider what needs to be done until their contacts end,' he says. 'Railway professionals know that rail needs to be planned decades ahead.'

The ORR shows that the average age of trains in the UK increased to 15.5 years in 2008, making them the oldest they have been since mid-2004, when the age reached 15.7 years. On long-distance lines, the age of trains is 18.28 years, on average, while those in London and the South-East average 14.37 years, which is the oldest since late 2004.

Outside the London area trains are even older, with rolling stock averaging 17.8 years at the end of 2008. This is the highest figure seen in seven years.

'This is not only a disincentive in efforts to attract more passengers,' Keith says. 'It also means our drivers often have to endure poor working conditions in cabs.'

RAY BUCKTON REMEMBERED IN MINERS' STRIKE

I will always remember the one and only time I met Ray Buckton. It was in the middle of the great 1984-85 miners strike. ASLEF had always supported the NUM when its members were on strike most notably in their successful 1972 and 1974 struggles.

Twenty-five years ago ASLEF were once again backing the miners. I had recently returned from the former Soviet Union where I had been researching a book on the miners' leader Arthur Horner. Whilst there I visited the Donbas Coalfield where I saw vast pit-head collections for the striking British miners but the Soviet miners' union was sceptical about getting the money to Britain because of the fear that it could cause a major diplomatic incident.

I relayed this information to South Wales President Emlyn Williams and national President Arthur Scargill who were meeting transport union leaders at the Wales TUC in Cardiff. It was mid-Summer and thousands of striking miners families were deep in debt and struggling to survive. Most of all they needed food and clothing especially for their children. Ray Buckton listened carefully to me and after a short discussion he said he had a solution. He would use his links with the International Transport Workers' Federation. And that was it. He did not want any credit: he saw it as his duty to help other workers in struggle.

I never asked again about the promise – in struggles of this kind 'you only need to know what you need to know' - but I strongly assume that Ray Buckton delivered on it.

I have never told this story before but feel now, a quarter of a century on, it is time to praise Ray Buckton and ASLEF for their quiet solidarity during a momentous trade union struggle for jobs and communities.

● *Hywel Francis is the Labour MP for Aberavon and is the author of the recently published book 'History on Our Side: Wales and the 1984 - 85 Miners' Strike'.*

GOVERNMENT PROMISES CHANGE TO COLOMBIAN AID

Foreign Secretary David Miliband has pledged that the government will change the aid it gives to Colombia from military aid to assistance to civil society and the justice system.

Both the TUC and ASLEF welcomed the statement as 'a positive help to unions and democratic forces'.

TUC chief and Justice for Colombia president Brendan Barber says this 'recognises that Colombia needs an end to the culture of impunity which has allowed the murders of thousands of trade unionists and other democrats to remain unpunished.'

Nine trade unionists have been murdered in the country this year.

'If this change of direction is reflected in positive action – which we intend to ensure is the case – it will be a major step forward for human rights in Colombia,' says Keith Norman.

'Hopefully this will end a shameful episode in our relations with that country.'

EURO MEETINGS PLANNED

ASLEF is arranging meetings with sister unions in Paris and Belgium to find a common approach to a variety of issues concerning Eurostar and to discuss the lessons that can be learned from our experience of the trans-border operation. Both the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) in France and Belgium's Centrale Générale des Services Publics (CGSP) have welcomed the proposal which was put forward at last year's ASLEF conference (AAD).

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The Rev Jessie Jackson with his own ASLEF fan club!

ASLEF MEETS 'INSPIRING' JESSIE JACKSON

A report from FLOYD DOYLE, chair of the union's Black and Ethnic Minority Representative Committee

ASLEF representatives were delighted to be invited to a reception given for Jesse Jackson in a Mayfair hotel on 25 March. The event was hosted by Keith Vaz MP and ASLEF's general secretary and president came along with Aaron Clapp and Pat Blake from the BEMRC and several head office staff.

We were standing chatting in the reception area when to our surprise we saw the Rev Jackson walking down the steps towards us! Applause began the moment an announcement was made, and as he walked towards the excited crowd he stretched out to shake the hand of the first person nearest to him - which happened to be our very own general secretary Keith Norman! The next five hands he shook were all ASLEF - including my own.

Rev Jackson made a short but inspiring speech, urging us, 'Let nothing break your spirit - we are winning this battle' and declaring that, 'We have achieved freedom, but we haven't achieved equality.'

After Rev Jackson left with his wife and one of his sons, we stayed and chatted to representatives from other unions, realising how privileged we all were to see a person who had been at the forefront of Civil Rights – a man who was there when Dr Martin Luther King Jr was tragically assassinated.

I'll never forget the day I met Jesse Jackson and shook his hand. It will be a story to tell the grandchildren.

SCOTS POLITICIANS SEE ASLEF LEARNING FIRST-HAND

MEMBERS of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Committee for Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture took time out to drop in on ASLEF's union learning project last month to see how we deliver union-led learning for our members *reports the union's Scottish Project Worker* **JIM BAXTER**.

The politicians were met at our Rail Learning Centre in Stow College, Glasgow, by ASLEF reps and college vice-principal Alex McLean. We explained how we run the project and deliver free and shift friendly learning in the college and our seven workplace based learning centres.

We were met at Yoker Depot's Rail Learning Centre by union learner rep Iain Dougan and ScotRail Acting Managing Director Steve Montgomery where we spoke about how we use the facilities to encourage non traditional learners back into learning.

The Committee were then whisked to ScotRail's Training and Development Academy in Glasgow City Centre for a guided tour, including being shown the company's table top simulator (that's a train set to you and me!). The committee saw that union led learning also had a knock on effect for the company.

Claire Baker MSP, Christina McKelvie MSP, Kevin Lindsay, Karen Whitefield MSP, Hugh Bradley and Jim Baxter next to the Tabletop simulator.

It was a successful day which gave ASLEF the opportunity to discuss with those in power the need for sustainable funding if the union is to continue its good work in getting people back into learning.

15 YEARS OF THE CHUNNEL On 6 May 1994 the Queen and France's President Francois Mitterrand formally opened the Channel Tunnel with elaborate ceremonies in France and the UK. The project took eight years and £10bn to build, more than double what it was estimated to cost in 1987 when it was given the go-ahead.

At the same time that the tunnel was being hailed as a great technological achievement, the inevitable doom merchants were already expressing concerns about its long-term financial viability.

Twenty-three of the Tunnel's 31 mile length are under water, on average 150 feet under the sea-bed. The tunnel is the first land link between Britain and Europe since the last Ice Age about 8,000 years ago.

GERMAN RAIL BOSS QUITS IN SPY ROW German rail boss Hartmut Mehdorn has left the company (or, been shoved out of the door!) after admitting spying on 173,000 staff, including monitoring their e-mails. He was also found to have been responsible for the deletion of an email sent out by the train drivers' union GDL calling for strike action two years ago.

RAILWAY CHILDREN APPEAL Andy Savage, the Deputy Chief Inspector of RAIB, is taking part in the Railway Children charity's '3 Peaks' event for the sixth time. With two colleagues he will climb Snowdon, ScaFell Pike and Ben Nevis in just over 30 hours.

It's easy to sponsor the RAIB team – if you go to www.justgiving.com/theraib you can do so in a few minutes.

Branch secretaries exchange opinions at Northern College

SUCCESSFUL BRANCH SECRETARIES COURSE

A SUCCESSFUL course for ASLEF branch secretaries took place last March at Northern College, Barnsley *reports* **G. BOYLE** who is the secretary of Manchester Piccadilly No1.

The 25 people at the event came from all over the country, ranging from Perth to Hastings! I would like to place on record our appreciation and thanks to all concerned for making the course a useful and informative success.

Over the three days some interesting and diversifying points of view were expanded, but each had the common aim of making ASLEF stronger through its solidarity and unity .

Special thanks to District Organiser Steve Grant for his insight into ASLEF'S workings, course tutor Michelle for her guidance, and all the welcoming staff at Northern College for their hospitality.

COMPANY WEBSITES HAVE BEGUN A growing number of Company Councils have been taking advantage of the union's training programme to establish their own web-sites. So far Southeastern, EWS/I and National Express East Anglia and Crosscountry have sites up and running, while other councils have the technical knowledge and are amassing information to put on line.

The easy way to check if your company is on-line yet is to go to the union's main website at www.aslef.org.uk and look inside 'Useful Links' which is on the toolbar at the top.

EASTER RAIL BOOKINGS UP 40% On-line rail bookings to UK destinations increased by 40% compared with last Easter. Nearly 45,000 people booked advance tickets for the bank holiday with online company thetrainline.com, compared with 31,000 in 2008.

Birmingham to London went up by 238%, Glasgow to London by 320% and Edinburgh to Manchester by 141%.

DERBY JOBS FOR BOMBARDIER Transport Secretary, Geoff Hoon, says that jobs will be safeguarded at Derby-based train builder Bombardier, thanks to a new agreement between the Department for Transport and National Express East Anglia, (NXEA). Government funding will be made available to allow NXEA to add 188 more carriages to their fleet, with 120 being built by Bombardier, primarily for use on the Stansted Express route.

For all those of you who think superstitions are ridiculous, we include this picture that was taken at Ripple Lane. When? Friday 13th, of course …

DID YOU KNOW?

ASLEF MEMBERS RECEIVE FREE LEGAL SERVICES:

- Free legal advice & representation for any personal injury at or away from work
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- Free Wills & reduced rates for conveyancing
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- Special terms for clinical negligence
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HOON CHALLENGED OVER UPGRADES AND RENEWALS

Reports National Organiser Simon Weller

Secretary of State for Transport Geoff Hoon was accused of a 'seriously flawed analysis and a lack of knowledge of the current situation with the freight operators and the deferral of essential upgrades and renewals' when he spoke to a recent meeting of the Labour Transport Group (LTG).

The LTG is a body within the Labour Party that aims to 'develop new thinking on all aspects of sustainable transport policy within the aims and values of the Labour Party'. It is a worthwhile and potentially important group for ASLEF to be involved with and I was pleased to be elected recently to its executive body.

EFFICIENCY OR IRRESPONSIBILITY?

The Minister sought to justify the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) mandating Network Rail (NR) to make efficiency savings of 21%. As a result, NR has responded by cutting out the renewals and upgrades for 2009 – 2010.

Geoff Hoon: A flawed analysis

The immediate impact of this is the halving of possession trains from 8,000 to less than 4,000 – and that is without taking into account the associated engineering movements. And it is happening just as freight operators are feeling the squeeze as commercial freight traffic has collapsed. So whilst Gordon Brown calls for 'fiscal stimulus' of the economy, his Secretary of State for Transport pursues a stupid and short sighted policy that results in cutting off work for our members.

We made it clear to Hoon that we believe he is utterly wrong to describe this action – as he had in other correspondence - as being a 'small adjustment' and not having a 'material effect'.

DISASTER FOR DB-S

DB-S has already declared 160 train drivers redundant simply because of the recession. This is probably the first time that train drivers have seen compulsory redundancies since Beeching and the end of steam.

Network Rail provides over 20% of DB-S's turnover and has extensive contracts with other operators such as Heavy Haul and GBRf. We must brace ourselves for threats of further redundancies among our members as a result of the deferral of the Network Rail renewal work. Hoon's department has stated there will be no redundancies amongst Network Rail staff. The reason there are no redundancies amongst Network Rail staff is because they don't provide the train drivers!

If, as is claimed, the deferred renewals are still to be completed in the control period (the five years 2009 to 2014) then the work slated for the first part of the period will be competing for resources at the same time as work projected for the second part. However, the freight companies will be under pressure not to carry unproductive drivers in the short term - so they may not have the necessary number of train drivers to cope with the expected upturn in commercial traffic and the planned renewals as well as the additional work from the deferral.

DEBACLE FOR PUBLIC

The impact on the public will be increased disruption in the latter part of the control period as the planned renewals are condensed into a much tighter time frame. There will be a greater number of temporary and emergency speed restrictions. We can only hope they will not reach post-Hatfield levels, as Network Rail ensures that the lack of maintenance doesn't create a risk of derailment in the early stages of the control period.

There is also the problem of ensuring suitable diversionary routes remain open whilst this deferred renewal work is completed during the latter part of the control period and increased disruption. Passengers can be put on buses to bypass the closed lines but freight, coal and steel can't - it goes on the road and our experience is once rail freight traffic is seen as unreliable and goes to road it doesn't come back; compounding the effects of the recession.

EC BEGINS FIGHT BACK

The Executive Committee has made campaigning on this issue central to the ITF Safety Day of 28 April. and ASLEF has produced a leaflet to get our message over to the travelling public - but it can't just stop on one day of action.

It's vital we all put pressure on our own MPs to sign Early Day Motion 794, laid down by David Drew MP - a member of the ASLEF Parliamentary group - and continue to get the message over that these deferrals are short sighted, don't help the long term viability of the railways and may have a major detrimental effect on our safety.

RETURN THE ROSCOS, URGES UNION **The government has been forced to set up a ROSCO of its own which will fund new diesel multiple units. Meanwhile the Competition Commission (CC) inquiry into the market for the leasing of rolling stock for passenger rail services calls for greater competition and says that franchises should be made longer (12-15 years).**

Keith Norman says the CC report ignores the fact that the rolling stock companies have been cash cows for their owners, primarily the banks. 'Angel Trains, for instance, was bought by the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1997 for £408 million yet sold in 2008 for £3.6bn.'Over the same period the amount of rolling stock on the UK rail network has grown by 3% while the number of journeys taken increased by 60%. 'Rolling stock has been money for old rope for these companies' says Keith 'and they should be returned to public hands without delay.'

US TRAILS ON RAIL **When Barack Obama announced his plans for improving US rail last month, the most remarkable thing was not his proposals – but the realisation of the desperately poor state of American railways!**

The President said, 'High-speed rail is long-overdue, and this plan lets American travellers know that they are not doomed to a future of long lines at the airports or jammed cars on the highways.'

But most surprising for Europeans was the fact that the high speeds the US hopes to achieve are 100mph. America currently has only one high speed line: the Acela which runs between Washington, New York and Boston. But the train - though built to a capability of reaching speeds of 150mph - rarely attains speeds of above 80mph.

WHAT THE UNION WAS DOING 100 AND 50 YEARS AGO

A century ago a report from the Leeds branch was so marvellous it doesn't matter if we don't know what's going on – while 50 years back the Journal offered proof that you had to be in ASLEF to do the job properly …

100 YEARS AGO

In the May 1909 Journal, 'One of the Boys' reported on a Good Friday meeting of the Leeds No 1 Branch in a style that our modern editior can only applaud!

"Throw open wide the portals of fame and let the welkin ring, for our day of mirth and gladness has again been pleasantly and profitably spent, and we have enjoyed it exceedingly well. In the Gladstone Hall, New Wortley, the members of this branch again held their annual Good Friday gathering, the profits of which (if any) should go in aid of our Society's Orphan Fund....

"(The chairman) ....then called upon Mr.Fox to make the presentation in our name of an illustrated framed address to Mr. C.Woodhead, late engineman on the Great Northern Railway. Oh, yes, friends, it was Mr. Fox, who presides at 8, Park Square, the same gentleman that every other branch is so eagerly desirous of securing to attend their annual gatherings, and the success of their pleadings, their bluffing and cajoling (aye, and even their threats of force to compel him to be present at the extreme ends of this little isle at one and the same time), of which they afterwards make open boast and take unto themselves the proud distinction for twelve months."

50 YEARS AGO

Toram Beg's Scottish Opinion in the May 1959 Journal explained how you needed to be an ASLEF member to become 'the complete engineman'

A psychiatrist could possibly write this article giving deeper and more abstruse reasons for what he says, but I am more competent to do so. I am more competent because I know engines and enginemen better than any psychiatrist could ever hope to do. I also have proved long before I ever heard of psychiatry that no man can be a completely good and efficient engineman unless he is also an interested trade unionist.

I know this assertion will shock the complacent who saunters through his career on the footplate, smugly satisfied that he cannot run his trains to time, but also, if need be, can dismantle certain parts of his engine and put them together again.

All these I agree are a must, and without them he would fall down on the specification which is essential to qualify for a pass in good enginemanship.

But there is an awful lot more required before he can really make the grade, and I could quote a lot of cases where an engineman has smirched his reputation because he thought it wasn't necessary for him to get first-hand knowledge inside an ASLE&F branch room."

Extracts selected and edited by Jane Pimlott

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TEN REASONS TO TELL EURO

'WE DON'T WANT

Freight on Rail campaigner **Philippa Edmunds** urges ASLEF members to get a commitment from their MEP candidates that they will oppose attempts by the European Commission to allow juggernauts on UK roads. She wants us to contact them all, regardless of political party, in advance of the 4 June election to ask their position on longer and heavier lorries, (25 metres long and 60 tonnes weight) – and to make them aware of our ten reasons to oppose their introduction into the UK …

THE European Commission (EC) is currently evaluating longer heavier lorries, which would be fifty per cent longer and a third heavier than existing HGVs. Certain EC bureaucrats are aiming to push LHVs through with the help of the Swedish Presidency, which already allows LHVs, in the second half of the year. The likelihood of a new Transport Commissioner in September, who could well support LHVs, has to be factored in, too.

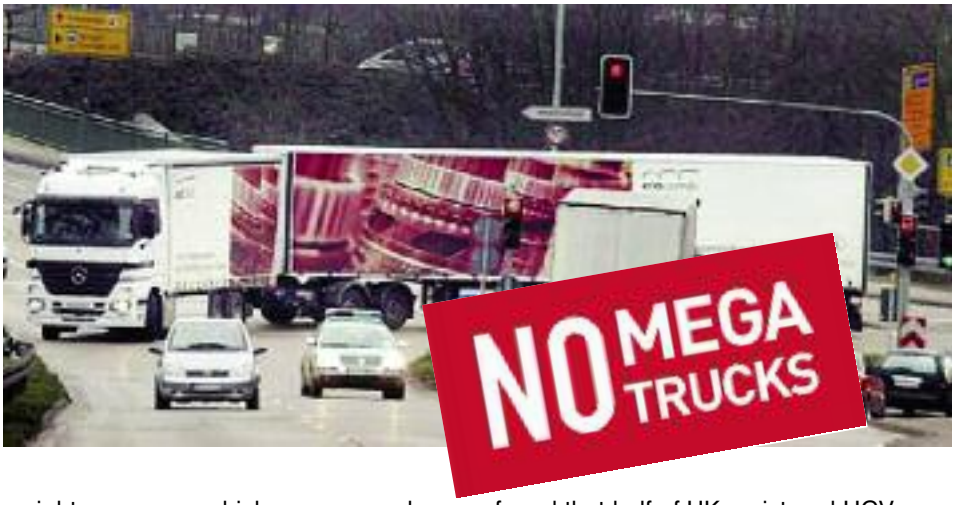
We need your support in making sure that MEP candidates realise that public opinion is opposed to massive lorries. Aslef opinion polling in both 2005 and 2007 showed that over 75% of people oppose LHVs.

While the UK Government's rejected trials of 60-tonne 25.5 metre lorries on UK roads in June 2008, if the European Parliament allows longer heavier lorries to travel across member states, it will mean in the medium term that LHVs would come to the UK because of pressure from the road haulage industry.

The proponents of LHVs will be lobbying hard too so we must make sure that opposing LHVs is centre stage in these elections. LHVs are currently the biggest threat to rail freight. Freight on Rail believes that these massive lorries would have terrible economic, environmental and safety implications and have no place on UK roads for ten key reasons

1 Previous increases in lorry dimensions have resulted in more lorries driving around less full, causing more road congestion and more pollution, which is the reverse of what was claimed would happen. The proponents of LHVs are using the same flawed arguments again.

Existing sized lorries are large enough! Since the last increase in maximum weights, average vehicle occupancy has been going down and over a quarter of lorries are driving around empty. In 2005 27.4% of lorries were driving around empty whereas it was 26.4% in 2001.



2 LHVs would destroy the majority of rail freight which has a much better environmental and safety record than road and force trainloads of freight back onto our congested roads. LHVs would undermine container and bulk rail freight; Freightliner found that up to 66% of container traffic could be forced back onto the roads. Detailed examination of rail's bulk freight flows by EWS in May 2007 found that up to 40% of aggregates currently carried by rail could switch to road and almost 20% of metals traffic.

3 Road haulage industry has a poor record in complying with existing road regulations

Over 82% of HGVs exceeded their speed limit of 50 mph on dual carriageways and almost three-quarters exceeded the 40 mph limit on single carriageway non-built up roads in 2007.

VOSA spot checks in October 2008 found that half of UK registered HGVs stopped were breaking the law. IFW 21st October 2008.

The number of UK registered HGVs being check weighed has decreased by 64% since 2003 although weight and drivers' hours transgressions have more than doubled in same period

4 LHVs have dangers of their own due to their size and lack of manoeuvrability

DfT research showed that because of their size and weight, when HGVs are involved in accidents the level of injury tends to be higher. On motorways, HGVs are over three times as likely as cars to be involved in fatalities from road accidents per billion kms travelled.

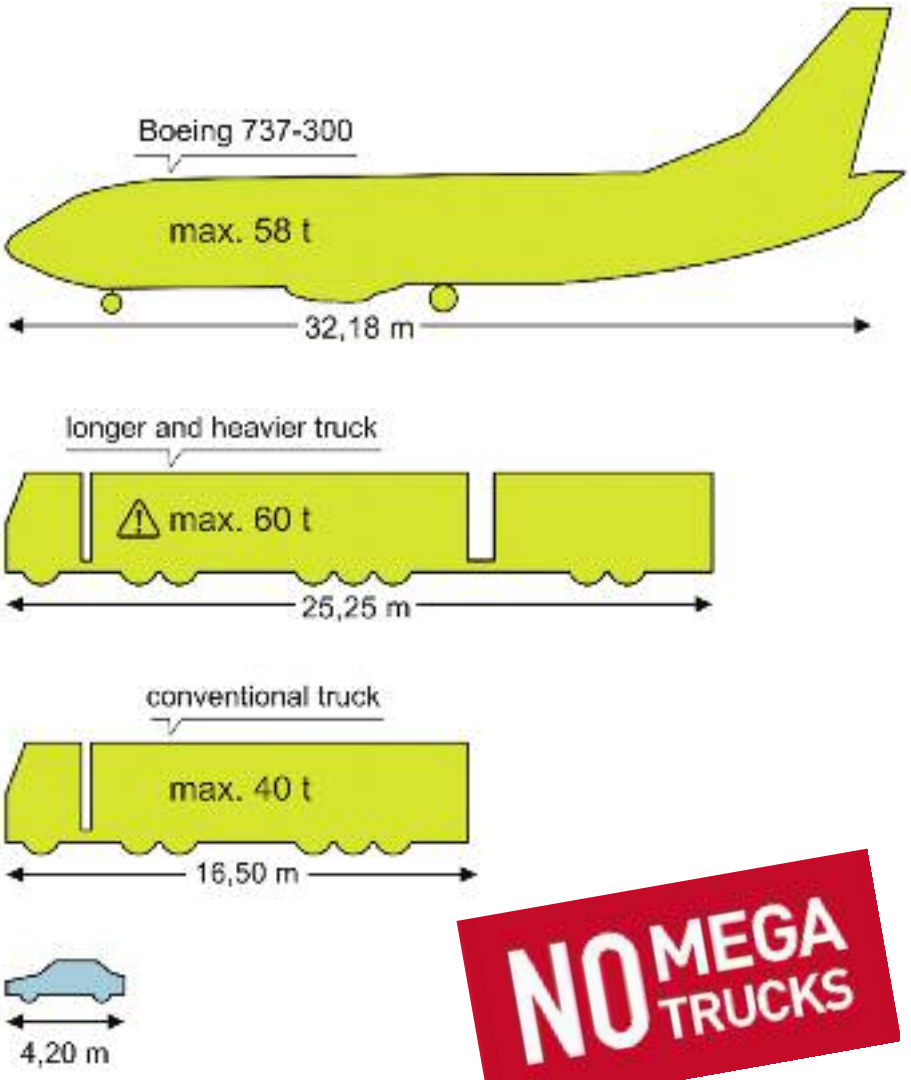
Source: DfT Transport Statistics Traffic Speeds Figure 3.5C for 2007 issued July 2008

STABILITY OF LHVS

We question the stability of these double trailer vehicles. The take up of draw bar vehicles in the UK has not been significant because of stability issues on motorways. In 2006, 532 HGVs

ELECTION CANDIDATES ...

JUGGERNAUTS'



overturned which is almost one and half HGVs per day. In the same period only 10 buses/coaches overturned. In 2006, 144 HGVs jack-knifed, of which articulated ones accounted for 125.

5 Longer heavier lorries will have minimal impact on road congestion whereas an average freight train which is designed for heavy and bulky cargoes, can remove 50 HGVs from our roads. Source Network Rail 2008.

6 Trying to restrict LHVs to dual-carriageways and motorways simply will not work

The promoters are claiming that these vehicles will be restricted to motorways, dual carriageways and major roads, but there is no mechanism available to keep them to this and the type of road has not been fully clarified. The reality is that these vehicles will need local access to distribution hubs which would not be on motorways/dual carriageways, but on roads which are totally unsuitable for vehicles of this scale.

7 HGVs are up to 160,000 times more damaging to road surfaces than the average car; some of the heaviest road repair costs are therefore almost exclusively attributable to the heaviest vehicles.

The damage to underground structures (including gas and water mains, electricity and telecommunications) caused by existing HGVs has yet to be quantified.

8 The claimed environmental benefits of LHVs rely on very high levels of load utilisation – in excess of that routinely achieved within the haulage sector. Therefore at lower levels of utilisation the environmental performance of LHVs would be worse. German trials showed that utilisation of above 77% for LHVs was needed for fuel costs to breakeven. In 2006 in the UK HGVs over 33 tonnes were only 73% full.

Source Umwelt Bundes Amt August 07 and UK CSRGT 2006

9 Lower road haulage costs will increase lorry miles with LHVs becoming travelling warehouses.

LHVs would mean more lorry-miles not fewer because demand will be stimulated as LHVs could reduce road haulage costs by up to 20% according to the freight industry. Distribution centres are likely to be rationalised, saving on real estate costs, with lorry tonne kilometres increasing in line with current trends.

10 As it is, road freight only pays between one to two thirds of the costs it imposes on society in terms of road accidents, pollution, damage to infrastructure and loss of productivity.

For more information on the campaign against Longer and Heavier Vehicles (LHVs) and lists of candidates for the European Election go to the Freight on Rail website www:freightonrail.org.uk

Please let Philippa Edmunds at philippaedmunds@freightonrail.org.uk know what the responses were from the candidates so that Freight on Rail can log them and quote back to those who become MEPs.

VOTE FOR YOU INTERESTS IN EUROPE

Q HOW DOES THE EUROPEAN UNION WORK?

'Europe' can seem very complex, which is inevitable to some extent as it tries to juggle having Europe-wide directives that still leave room for each of its 27 members to have power over their own affairs.

Here's a rough guide …

Q WHO ARE WE VOTING FOR?

We've voting for Members of the European Parliament (MEP). Their job in the European Parliament is to amend, change or reject EU laws that are proposed by the European Commission. It's the same as an MP in this country when they vote on government proposals.

Most laws are only passed when they've been approved by the Parliament and the Council of Ministers, just as a law in this country has to be passed by the Commons and the Lords. Exceptions are foreign policy and agriculture. The Parliament also oversees the budget, having the final say over about half the spending of the EU budget. Mostly based in Brussels, MEPs vet, and can sack, European Commissioners.

Q WHAT'S THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION?

This is like the civil service but it is also the only body that can propose laws. There are 27 commissioners, one of whom is their President. They each have a policy area, like transport, and they're usually politicians who've been nominated by member states. Mandelson was trade commissioner and Neil Kinnock has been the Transport Commissioner. They are all supposed to represent all members and not their own country's interests.

Q AND THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS?

The Council of Ministers is made up of the relevant government ministers from each country, depending on the subject being discussed. So we have for example the Social Affairs Council, or the Environment Council and so on. These ministers attend to represent their own county's interests. Often they just rubber stamp technical decisions but no law can be passed without the Council's agreement.

The only time I can recall the British being genuinely enthu the European Union (EU) was in the 1960s when Presiden veto our application to join. We all got very cross about be the French. The French leader's objection at the time was t lack of interest' in the Common Market.

And there I think the irritable Frenchman had a point that still holds We don't interest ourselves in Europe. We tolerate it.

The fact is that, like it or not, we are part of the EU and it touches al told the CBI conference in October 2004, 'Half of all our major new re the EU' and although no one to my knowledge has every substantiated it does illustrate the importance of the EU and the European Parlian side the EU has introduced regulations on working time and parental, leave that have touched our working lives directly.

Next month there will be elections to the European Parliament (EP) a pages is to ensure that we are all aware of what the EP does and wh exercise our democratic right to vote.

To be disinterested isn't an option. I hope you'll make the effort to count through the ballot box.

It's easily confused with the European Council, which is the name given to the regular ´summits´ of heads of state or government.

Q WHAT ABOUT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE?

This court rules on disputes over EU treaties and laws and can hand out stiff fines to countries that don't comply with its rulings. Actions are brought by individuals. The judges come from each member state.

This Luxemburg based court is nothing to do with the European Court for Human Rights in Strasburg, which is outside the European Union (EU) remit.

Q AND WHAT'S THE COURT OF AUDITORS?

Its job is to make sure our money's well spent. About ten years ago it got quite famous when it regularly revealed all kinds of fraud and ´payment errors´.

Q AND THE EUR CENTRAL BAN WHAT?

The Central Bank is the of the Euro and keep price for monetary policy in the

Q IS THAT IT?

No. Then we've got the

Q WHAT DO THE DO?

They are, despite being pretty important. This is w specialist issues like rail. dations and offer opinions

There are 22 Agencies evaluating medical produc health and safety at work The most significant for A Railway Agency.

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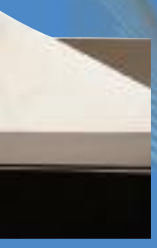

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Agencies.

E AGENCIES

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They make recommen-
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covering things like
cts, vocational training,
and the environment.
SLEF is the European

ASLEF´S DIRECT CONCERNS IN EUROPE

National Organiser Simon Weller outlines the importance for ASLEF members of the work being carried out by the European Railway Agency …

Most of ASLEF´s specific concerns with Europe are dealt with by the European Railway Agency (ERA) because it makes the recommendations which the Commission uses to propose laws or propose directives. Every EU member has a representative, the UK´s being Chris Carr, an official at the Department for Transport (DfT).

The main subjects dealt with are

- Railway Safety
- Interoperability
- European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) and
- Economic evaluation.

Interoperability – an awful word meaning trains can work on systems all over Europe – involves the ERA coming up with technical specifications known as TSIs. They will cover every nut and bolt of rail travel between members states, not only concerning infrastructure, gauge width, electrification standards and rolling stock, but also including driver proficiency and testing and transferability of driving qualifications.

So the ERA is drawing up regulations that could have a direct effect on many of our members in the future.

The ERTMS system is also of huge importance to ASLEF members because its core is a proposed Europe-wide signalling system which is believed to include the highest available safety standards. .

'BONKERS BRUSSELS' – GOOD FUN, NOT TRUE

If you want to know what really goes on at the European Parliament – don't read the tabloid press! Many of their 'Brussels' stories are misleading : and the rest are untrue! The sad thing is that everyone seems to believe them anyway. Here are a few selections of 'Euro-myths' that the European Commission passed to us …

DAILY MAIL REPORT - 999

Heart attack man dies as 999 crew take a rest break

Two ambulance crews were unavailable to help a dying man because they were on breaks laid down by European laws. Under new rules to comply with health and safety and the European Working Time directives the two crews remained at their North London ambulance station despite receiving a 999 call.....Yesterday a London Ambulance Service spokesman admitted two crews were unable to attend because they were on "EU rest breaks at the time of the call".

Daily Mail, 6 January 2007

IN FACT The Working Time Directive specifically permits breaks to be deferred in an emergency or even skipped altogether. The situation described was an issue for health service management or unions to address. It was never a 'Brussels diktat'

DAILY STAR REPORT – WORKER'S CONTROL

Euro law storm in a teabag

New Euro laws will allow Brit workers to tell their bosses what colour carpets and brand of tea bags they want. The bizarre rules could mean firms would have to consult staff on many trivial issues, which, say angry Tories, will increase costs and undermine competitiveness.

Daily Star, 12 January 2004

FACT The Worker Information and Consultation Directive 2001, which must now be put into the national laws of the fifteen EU countries, obliges all businesses with over fifty employees to provide for genuine information and consultation of their workers before all major decisions at the company, especially those affecting jobs. It makes no mention of tea bags or carpets

DAILY MAIL REPORT – MEASURES

Pint-sized EU upstarts

We must save our pinta. The EU bureaucrats think we should quaff our milk, and beer, in litres and half litres. The Daily Express has news for them. In Britain, we have been happy with pints, miles an hour and feet and inches for hundreds of years – and no one is confused.

Daily Express 30 January 2006

FACT The European Commission is in favour of keeping the British pint and loaf. Under a new drive against red tape, the Commission wants to repeal a number of useless European laws leaving businesses free to decide what kind of packaging to use for goods such as the pint and loaf.

SUNDAY MIRROR REPORT - YOGHURT

Brit yoghurt – EU says we have to call it Fermented Milk Pudding

British yoghurt will be renamed "fermented milk pudding" – if Brussels has its way. Under plans being discussed by EU officials, only yoghurts made using the sour-tasting bacteria according to traditional Bulgarian recipes will be called "yoghurt".

Sunday Mirror 5 March 2006

FACT There are no plans to rename yoghurt as heat fermented milk pudding.

FOR TRANSPORT, YOUR EURO VOTE MATTERS

argues **Brian Simpson**, Labour MEP for the north-west of England and Transport Spokesperson for the Party of European Socialists

THE outcome of the Euro elections on 4 June will be very important for railways, for the wider Trade Union movement and for the European Union as a whole. They will determine which direction Europe will take over the next five years.

Politically the left of European politics faces a serious challenge from the right and this is reflected in Britain where a threat exists not only from the Tories, Lib/Dems and Nationalists but from the far right BNP particularly in my own North West Region.

This march of the right wing across Europe and in Britain has to be stopped to ensure that the progress we have made since Jacques Delors unveiled his Social Chapter is not eroded. Conservatives and Liberals are hell-bent on returning the European Union to a 'businessman's club', with workers and their rights relegated to an after-thought.

Nowhere is this more relevant than in the railway sector - and it's interesting to compare records in the European Parliament over many years on how the various political groupings have campaigned for railways.

LABOUR PUSH FOR RAIL The Socialist Group (of which Labour MEPs are an important grouping) has had railways at the forefront of our transport policy for many years, be that urban mobility or developing freight strategies. Whether we argue about the development and extension of the Trans European Network or the need to protect the environment, rail has always been at the heart of our policies.

Yet on a number of occasions when the Socialist Group have put forward railways as a priority, and insisted that railway workers' rights and conditions are protected, we have been faced with opposition from political opponents. Why? Because they believe that railways should be subjected to market conditions in a free market and that railways and their workforce have been protected for far too long by member states. Labour and Socialist Groups MEPs reject this. We believe railways play an important environmental and social role as well as being an essential generator of economic recovery and sustainability.

In our manifesto we call for more investment in our transport infrastructure - and in particular our railways.

HIGH SPEED PRIORITY Our demands for the next five years and beyond include the extension of High Speed Rail Lines, the creation of rail freight corridors and the need to invest to ease congestion and expand the rail network particularly in our urban areas.

To do this it is essential to work with railway operators and railway workers through their trade unions. They know how the industry works and are committed to making it work better. Yet Conservatives, Liberals, UKIP and the far right have on every occasion voted against giving railway workers an equal say in how their industry works.

The battle lines for Railway workers are clearly defined in this election.

On 4 June you can decide in which direction Europe will go. The choice is free market, full liberalisation and 'lower standards' – or investment, co-operation and railways at the heart of our transport policies.

I love railways and admire greatly the professionalism and dedication of railway workers. Labour MEPs and our Socialist colleagues share that view and will strive to support our railways in the next European Parliament. We need your support on 4 June.

The statutory dispute resolution regulations which came into force in 2004 were so complicated that the writing was on the wall for them almost immediately. But their replacement is almost as complicated says **Victoria Phillips** of Thompsons Solicitors.

TRIGGER HAPPY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

FIVE years after the much-hated dispute regulations started having unions and lawyers contorting their way through a complex array of hoops, the Employment Act 2008 brings us, this April, new arrangements. But these are almost as convoluted as the 2004 regulations.

GRIEVANCES

The 2004 regulations required employees to follow a three-step grievance procedure before they could submit a tribunal complaint. Under the new arrangements, this requirement won't apply if the complaint is about something that happens "wholly on or after 6 April".

So far, so simple. However, the old regime (submitting a written grievance, attending a meeting, and then attending an appeal) will apply if the date of the action that the employee is complaining about (the trigger event) either

- takes place wholly before 6 April; or
- starts before 6 April and carries on after it

In that case employees must before a "cut-off" date either trigger the old grievance procedure by lodging a written grievance or lodge a tribunal claim. For cases with a three month time limit, such as discrimination claims, the cut-off point is 4 July 2009. For cases with a six month limit such as redundancy payment claims and equal pay cases, it's 4 October.

If the trigger event takes place completely on or after 6 April, the statutory grievance procedure obviously doesn't apply at all which means that tribunals cannot stop cases from going ahead if the employee does not lodge a grievance. On the other hand, since the extension to Tribunal time limits are no longer available, the three or six month time limits will apply in the normal way.

DISCIPLINARIES

Similarly, the 2004 regulations required employers to follow a three-stage procedure if they wanted to dismiss an employee or discipline them (beyond an oral or written warning) because of something to do with their conduct or capability. This involved giving employees a written statement, having a meeting with them and then facilitating an appeal.

Again, a trigger event will decide whether the old regime or the new arrangements apply. The 2004 regulations kick in if, on or before 5 April 2009, the employer

- sent a step 1 letter to the employee, or
- held a step 2 meeting, or
- actually dismissed the employee or imposed "relevant disciplinary action" over and above an oral/written warning on grounds of conduct or capability

So even if the penalty is imposed on or after 6 April, the old regime will apply if the disciplinary process starts before then. But when the entire process starts on or after 6 April, the new arrangements apply.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS

From 6 April onwards (assuming there was no trigger event before then), tribunals will adopt a different approach to resolving disputes.

Instead of looking to see if the employer and employee followed the old three-stage procedure, they will rely on a new statutory code of practice produced by ACAS (the government's conciliation agency) and judge if it has been followed.

The code is vague (ACAS prefers "lighter touch") and no more than the sort of good practice that should be expected of employers. It includes that

- Employers and employees should raise and deal with issues promptly and should not unreasonably delay meetings, decisions or confirmation of those decisions.
- Employers should carry out any necessary investigations to establish the facts of a potential disciplinary issue.
- Employers should inform employees of the basis of the problem and give them an opportunity to put their case before making any decisions.
- Employees should set out a potential grievance in writing, having tried to resolve it informally first of all.
- Employers should allow employees to be accompanied at any formal disciplinary or grievance meeting.
- Employers should allow an employee to appeal against any formal decision made.

If, for some reason, the employer or the employee did not follow the code, the tribunal then has to decide whether that was unreasonable or not by taking various factors into account, such as the size of the business.

They can also adjust awards up or down by up to 25%. So union members should always follow the basic procedures in the new code to avoid their compensation being reduced.

The code will be supplemented by guidance to help everyone understand it and there will also be much more emphasis on conciliation under the new arrangements.

It's hard to imagine that the new rules could be much worse than the old ones but only time will tell whether they actually help to resolve (as opposed to deepen) workplace disputes.

(Left to right) Local Council Level Rep Darren Billings, Tony Alosko, Robin Vaughan, Dave Griffiths and RMT member Laura Walter

TO ARKWRIGHT LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

BACK at the end of 2008 our branch considered the problem of some members being critical of the union. To answer the criticisms we organised meetings of EWS and Freightliner business councils and our EC member Simon Weller with a view to answering some of the discontent.

The experiment met with mixed results. Oddly our EC member, who represents the decision-making level of the union attracted the least interest. This posed us the question, 'Do members actually understand how the union works?' Possibly not, although it is printed at the front of our diaries each year (and happily featured in the last edition of the Journal).

To further address the problem we organised a visit to Head Office so members could meet the Executive Committee, General Secretary and staff working in the various departments. This, we felt, would give us all the chance to question and talk about their duties, actions and decisions as well as seeing the building that houses it all.

On the day I'm sorry to say no one from EWS, and only four of us from Freightliner, could make the trip.

This was a shame as we were treated like royalty. We were given a guided tour, and spoke to each department, the EC and the general secretary. For most of us meeting the man who puts the Loco Journal together and the Industrial Relations department were the most interesting.

After the tour we met up with the EC at a local pub for a late lunch and a couple of beers, over which further topical discussions took place.

Overall it was a very informative and enjoyable visit and a shame it was poorly attended. Still, looking on the bright side, it probably means that most of our members are content with the way things are.

We are most grateful to the General Secretary and the EC for meeting us and taking time to answer our questions.

D. Griffiths Secretary – Eastleigh Branch

AL LAYTON'S WELL EARNED RETIREMENT

AL LAYTON, who started his railway career in Wales and now lives in Portsmouth, has retired from SWT due to ill health. Al joined ASLEF on 25 May 1961 and has now joined the union's Retired Members' Section.

At the Portsmouth & Isle of Wight branch meeting held on 24 Feb, the EC member for District 1, Simon Weller, presented Al with his well earned retirement certificate. Al said he was very pleased that the new Drivers' Compensation Scheme was put in place for medically retired drivers, as, due to his age, he would have received next to nothing in compensation had the old scheme been still in place.

He said he wanted to put on record his thanks and appreciation to all concerned for their help during his illness and especially to Sean Seymour of the SWT District Functional Council, for his help and guidance.

John Glazebrook Secretary - Portsmouth & IOW branch

ALF ENDS STEAM ERA IN FARNHAM

ALAN ('ALFIE') MANSBRIDGE has chucked in the towel and retired from the railway completing over 45 years service in the footplate grade.

Alfie's retirement severs the last link with the glorious days of steam at Farnham. He started as a cleaner boy in 1963 at Guildford Loco and then progressed to Fireman. When the steam days finished in July 1967, Alfie and the rest of the blokes from Guildford Loco moved six miles up the road to Woking.

Alfie came to Farnham after the diesel work at Woking started to dry up in the 90s.

Baz Foster and Martin Warrick - our LDC men, arranged a Saturday night party with the Landlord of the 'Lamb' pub.

Alfie was joined by his railway mates past and present who braved the Artic conditions - including our octogenarian Depot Master, Tim Crowley.

During the evening, Alfie was presented with a green "O" gauge model class 47 locomotive. Baz Foster, with a lot of skill and the assistance of Mike Watts, our chum from Fox Transfers, managed to number the loco 'D 1963'.

We wish Alfie a enjoyable and well earned retirement.

Steve West - Secretary - Farnham Branch

The D1963 – with Alfie!

TATTENHAM REUNION 29 MAY

A RE-UNION has been arranged for drivers, staff, friends and well-wishers associated with Tattenham Corner, Caterham and Purley. The event will take place on 29 May at the Foxley Hatch pub in Purley from 1600 onwards. All welcome. For further details contact Driver Nash on 07971 775816.

Howard Bridgeman with wife Jennifer, District Organiser Nick Whitehead and Skipton branch secretary Martin Exley

HOWARD SKIPS OFF

ABOUT 20 members and retired members of the Skipton branch, along with an old colleague from Holbeck, turned up to wish Bro Howard Bridgman a well deserved retirement. The function was held after the branch's usual monthly Sunday branch meeting at 'The Railway' public house.

Howard was presented with a retirement certificate and gifts by District 4 Organiser Nick Whitehead, while Mrs Bridgman was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Nick praised Howard's commitment to the Society over the years. He was one of the longest serving LLC reps in District Four, and his career included spells with British Rail, Regional Railways Northeast, MTL, Arriva and Northern Rail.

Everyone present had a wonderful time and as the drinks flowed many members reminisced about the old BR days.

Many thanks to Mrs Wood, the landlady of 'The Railway', for putting on an excellent buffet.

Martin Exley Secretary – Skipton branch

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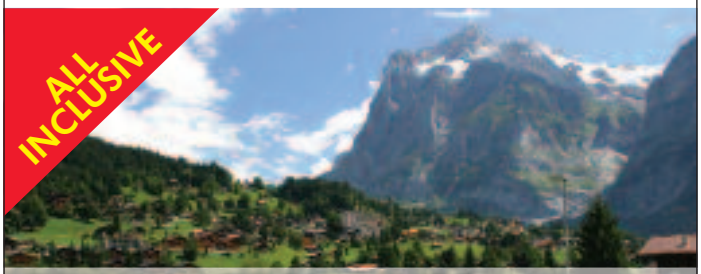

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WHEN WE WORK TOGETHER, WE DELIVER

Dave Vaughan, the Secretary of the union's Newton Heath branch, tells us about why he's 'proud to be union' …

LET me tell you about a week in January when I saw the workings of this union come together. It started badly. With the ink barely dry on agreements from last October committing the company to better working relationships, greater transparency and trust, and with the train plan still reeling from the biggest timetable change in years, local reps were called in by their respective managers to be told that a decision had come down from on high. The new diagrams, which were already a disgrace, were to be compressed yet again, and reduced in number. Work was to be transferred away from the depot in a year when we already knew that we would lose work as one of our routes leaves the heavy rail network. The decree also came down that we weren't allowed to contest this and were forbidden to implement any of the improvements we could make to diagrams. In other words, we were back to management by imposition.

Well, we're not likely to be told by management whether we can contest something or not. Needless to say, we did. The Fail to Agrees were registered and our union swung into action. The branch organised an emergency meeting on the day. The members (that's us) heard the facts and decided what we could do. An emergency resolution was sent down to Arkwright Road and before long Company Council members were involved, briefing the EC on the situation. The branch kept the District Organiser informed. Other branches played their part, sending their own resolutions. The local reps around the company kept each other up to date to present a common front.

By the end of the week, the EC had a resolution on the desks of the company's management making clear its backing for the local reps. The loss of work to the depot was minimised and Company Council had a minuted guarantee for the jobs of drivers at depots affected by the imminent route closure. The local reps were able to work again with local management to improve the diagrams at the depot, producing better links with better balanced diagrams.

What struck me about that week was that every part of the union played its part. The membership, branches, local reps, company council, full time officer and the EC: everyone pulled together as a team. What's more the team responded rapidly and got results. Within four days, I got to see what this union can do and it was impressive to see all the parts working together. I don't believe that is something that every union can deliver. But when everyone in your union represents those who do one job and one job only; when everyone in the union has done that job and understands the issues around that job and your workplace; when your Branch Secretaries not only know every member in their branches, but are also as close to the top table of the union, then you can deliver.

Proud to be union? You bet I am!

BERT FIELD – SERVED AS A REP FOR 30 YEARS

IT IS with great sadness that I have to advise of the sudden and unexpected death of Brother Bert Field, formerly of Battersea Branch

Born in 1933, Bert started work at 14 with the Southern Railway at Nine Elms Loco where he worked his way up the links with the likes of Derek Fullick and Ron Lifford. On reaching the top link he had his own engine, 35019 French Line CGT.

Bert married Pat during the 1955 strike. During their 54 years of marriage they had two sons of whom they were very proud. In 1960 Bert moved to Peckham Rye as a Motorman. He stayed until the depot closed four years later before moving to Victoria Central EMUT until his retirement in 1998.

Bert was a committed trade unionist and served as an LDC rep for over 30 years, right up to his retirement. He then joined the Campaign for Real Ale and was an unstinting worker at beer festivals and on committees.

He'll be missed by all who knew him or worked with him and our thoughts are with Pat and their sons at this sad time.

Graham Hoy Secretary – Battersea Branch

JOHN PITMAN – THE GOLD STAR MAN

JOHN PITMAN died on the 18 February 2009 aged 71. He contracted prostate cancer which was managed for a number of years but unfortunately he developed blood clots which proved terminal. It's a reminder to us all that if in doubt don't be scared to have the test - if it's caught in time, it is treatable.

John started at Hornsey Loco where he progressed to become a Driver. In 1968, along with the rest of us, he moved to Kings Cross when Hornsey was closed as a signing on point. After privatisation John served his time out in the local passenger company.

I have many fond memories of John as, like a number of us, had a motor cycle, a 650 BSA Gold Star. We formed a motorcycle club and indulged in many outings, two favourites being the Isle of Man TT and the National Motorcycle Rally, a 24-hour event terminating in Rhyl in north Wales.

John remained single for many years and devoted his time in looking after his Mum, until her demise. He then took up jogging, a hobby developed into his participating in marathons, including London and New York. While doing this he met and married Eileen and the pair lived life to the full, always travelling to far-flung places. Alas, no more.

Peter Smith - Reporter – Kings Cross

ARNOLD DENIS GRAHAM – PLYMOUTH DRIVER

WE have been informed by Mrs Graham that our colleague Arnold, ex-Plymouth, died on 3 October 2008.

Peter Smith Reporter - Retired Members Section

Jim White (centre) and Phil Ford wait to be presented to the Queen before driving her to Newcastle

JIM WHITE – ROYAL DRIVER

JAMES HERBERT WHITE died on 27 January at the age of 80. Jim was one of life's gentleman - big in stature and gentle in nature. Born on 1 March 1928 to a railway family in Norwich - his father was a train driver - the family moved to Yarmouth where, after leaving school at 14, Jim began work as a Steam Loco Cleaner. He progressed to Fireman before his time at Yarmouth was brought to an end by Dr Beeching. He ended his steam days back at Norwich.

Jim did his national service in the Royal Horse Artillery, being stationed in post-War Germany in 1964. With some work colleagues he went on holiday to Sitges in Spain where his life changed for ever – because this was where he met his Carol, his soul-mate-to-be. Their marriage in 1965 lasted over 43 years.

When Jim moved to Kings Cross to gain promotion, Jim and Carol along with their family Stephen and Melanie, set up home in Hatfield. Condolences to all, including grandchildren Scarlett and Sidney.

Jim was proud that he had twice driven a train carrying Queen Elizabeth II.

Peter Smith Reporter – Kings Cross

JACK HARMER, JP, BEM - RIP

I'M sorry to have to report the death at the age 89 of John Harmer, who was known as 'Jack'. He started his railway career at Ashford, Kent, as a cleaner along with former ASLEF Assistant Secretary Don Pullen.

Jack became a Driver and moved to Addiscombe with his family in the early '50s. He became involved in politics and was chairman of Addiscombe Labour Ward. In ASLEF he was an LDC rep and chairman of both the South East London branch and the Joint London LDCs.

Jack, who was President of his local Dunkirk Veterans Association, was awarded the BEM in 1973 and sat as a Justice of the Peace on the Friday Bench until he retired at 70.

Amazingly he still had time to indulge in 'half of bitter and a Bell's' and could be found in the Alma Tavern and latterly in Claret's Free House.

Jack retired at Addiscombe in 1984. He will be sadly missed by family and friends.

Graham Richards – retired Driver

PHILIP ANTONY ('BULL') DAVIES – ONLY 57

WE have been informed by his wife Andra that Philip died on 10 January. Sadly his health failed him at the tender age of 57. Phil started work at Kirkby in Ashfield in1966. When he moved to Toton he met Andra and they were married in 1972. Two years later they moved to Slade Green on the Southern, then onto Gillingham.

In 1984 they moved back north to Coalville, where Philip worked until it shut. He then returned to Toton.

Unfortunately due to ill health he retired in 2006, after 40 years of railway service, but he continued his membership of ASLEF in the retired members section.

Philip will be very much missed by friends, colleagues but most of all by Andra, their three children and two grandchildren. To them all we send our condolences, and may he R.I.P.

Peter Smith Reporter – Retired Members Section

MICKEY STOKES – A WONDERFUL ECCENTRIC

IT IS with great sadness that I report the death of retired driver Mickey Stokes.

Mick was a wonderful eccentric character who always came up with a comical retort to any situation.

He started on the railway in 1956 as a loco cleaner at Guildford shed, working up to the grade of Fireman. He loved the job so much that he would cycle over the notorious 'Hogs Back' from his home in Farnham to Guildford for an early shift, or back home after a late turn.

Mick came to Farnham to drive electric trains in 1964 where he spent the rest of his railway career. (As proof of this, I recently found a record of soap issue for Farnham and Mick's signature appears from 1964!)

He took early retirement in 1999 and a great retirement party was held for him which lasted all day. Mick had to book twelve hours! In his retirement he spent a lot of time in the Station Café at Alton having a cup of tea with the crew of the terminating trains.

Mick's funeral was on the 12 March and was attended by many of his railway mates.

Steve West Secretary - Farnham Branch

Driver Mick Stokes driving an Ascot to Guildford train about to collect the token for the single line at Frimley Junction from Signalman Jack Hills in the winter of 1968

LEN LACEY – A MAN WITH A SMILE

Len Lacey died on the 12 October 2007, aged 87, Unfortunately due to the Data Protection Act it took me until now to find out.

Len was a real loveable character who always had a smile and crackle in the sound of his voice when he laughed. He was a well known Kings Cross Top Shed man, renowned for his Manx-specification Velocet motorcycle that was always kept in perfect condition. As far as we know he still owned it till the day he died. Len, along with Jim Evans, was in the army and served in Iraq and Iran in the Second World War. He was one of the many we have to be grateful to for the freedoms we enjoy today.

Peter Smith Reporter – Kings Cross

GORDON GREY – A GEORDIE VOICE IN LONDON

Gordon Grey died in the Isabel Hospice in Welwyn Garden City on the 15 January at the age of 86. He was a northerner with a Geordie accent who came to Hatfield for a driving position and served on the Welwyn pilot till it was withdrawn. He then came to Kings Cross and took up his seniority position, serving on the main line until his retirement.

Peter Smith Reporter – Kings Cross

FRED BOWLEY – ANOTHER RIPPLE BOWS OUT

It is sad to report the passing of yet another Ripple Lane Pathfinder, Brother 'Fearless Freddy the Fly' Bowley.

Fred, who came from a large family living in the East End of London, prided himself on being a true Cockney. Fred served in the Royal Engineers during the War and after his demob he started his railway career at Devon's Road, Bow working his way through the grades to become a driver.

With the closure of Devon's Road, he then transferred to Plaistow Depot where the now famous Joe Brown used to work (but without the Bruvvers!). When Plaistow closed its doors Fred transferred to the new Ripple Lane Diesel Depot - and quickly became deputy foreman. It is alleged he was the first man at the depot to buy a car, when his colleagues still favoured the Roadster bicycle. Fred was a quiet gentle unassuming man who got on well with the train crews.

In 1981 Fred took early retirement and moved to New Zealand. In 1993 he came back for a short visit to meet up with family and former work colleagues. He was a bit of a lad in his youth and was probably not too far behind the Bruce Forsythe's and Lionel Blair's in the dancing department.

To keep himself active Fred took up water colour painting, the keyboard and gardening to name a few things. He even helped to restore an old steam loco at a local museum which now runs in the Founders Park Museum Village at a place called Nelson NZ. At the grand old age of 85 Fred came into the modern world when he took a few lessons and bought a computer with a webcam so he could stay in touch with everyone.

Fred passed away aged 89 in a rest home on 12 July 2008. Our condolences go to daughter Jo and son Bob and his surviving brother and two sisters and all the extended family.

Cliff Blackwell - Reporter - Tilbury Freightliner Branch

TOM JAMES – A STOURBRIDGE STALWART

I wish to inform you of the death of Tom ('Tank') James, formally of Stourbridge branch. Tom died peacefully in his sleep aged 85 having succumbed to cancer for the second time. His funeral took place on 13 March at Stourbridge Crematorium and was attended by former colleagues, friends and relatives. He is survived by his two daughters Judith and Susan.

After briefly going down 'the smoke' to Neasden to get his job in the 50s, Tom spent the rest of his time at Stourbridge depot until his retirement in the mid 80s. He was well respected by all who knew him as for many years he was an LLC rep and branch secretary.

Martin Bromage-Griffiths - former Stourbridge S/Man

YOU TELL US

These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the Journal at 9 Arkwright Road London NW3 6AB or by email to journal@aslef.org.uk

Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can.

This month we continue our STAR LETTER feature. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!

METROLINK WON'T GO AWAY!

WHEN I read the General Secretary's article on 'Members not Numbers' last month, I felt a little let down. You see, I've worked as a driver at Manchester Metrolink for 16 years. All that time we've wanted ASLEF to represent us, but we always hit a brick wall. I think it is all about unions playing politics, because the TGWU – who I think are a waste of space – have sole recognition in the company.

As a driver I find we're constantly arguing with unions as much as the company on working and safety issues.

You're probably aware that Metrolink is in the process of upgrading tracks and making major extensions and we drivers want our voices to be heard. But we know this won't happen because most decisions are made behind closed doors between the TGWU and the company. Of course, nothing can be proven.

We're still waiting to hear if ASLEF has made any progress with the TUC to have joint membership at Metrolink.

I can speak very highly of ASLEF officer Colin Smith who represented me a few years back, and I know it would have been a very different outcome if I'd been represented by a different union.

I do feel it's a numbers game with most unions, but members' choice should not be ignored. We won't go away.

Mrs. J. Sanders– Driver - Metrolink

THANKS TO ASLEF, I'M BACK ON TRACK

I AM writing (again) to express my thanks and gratitude for the help and assistance Kevin Lindsay and Yoker LLC gave to me over the last year while I have been off work due to illness and other domestic issues.

I am now back at work, but not driving trains, having been permanently redeployed to other duties within Scotrail. I am now content in my new job and – thanks to ASLEF – my life is back on track.

I'm grateful to everyone who asked about me and to First Scotrail for its help during the past 12 months.

Ricky Campbell - Glasgow

SNAPPY RESPONSE

I WRITE in response to the news article in the April Journal headed 'Virgin Calls For End to Kissing'. I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Norman's comment that it's 'one of the daftest rail stories I've seen since privatisation'. But I'd like to raise something else in a similar vein.

What's wrong with taking photographs on railway stations? As far as I can see, absolutely nothing! These bureaucratic staff seem to delight in upsetting folk who just want to photograph a loco or unit that interests them.

I have been approached and admonished by security staff on both rail and bus stations merely for taking a photo of a bus or train. What is the harm in it?

I have heard of rail enthusiasts being threatened with having their cameras or memory cards confiscated and even charged with causing obstruction , assault or acts of terrorism!

Something needs to be done, and fast!

J. Hughes – Driver and Photographer

GENEROUS UNKNOWN FRIENDS

I AM writing to thank everybody for all their help and financial support over the last 21 months.

I'd been on the railway since I left school in July 1990. In that time I've worked on the platform, ticket office and as a crossing keeper at various locations in the Faversham area. I got a driver's job based at London Victoria in March 2002.

In June 2007 I was taken ill at work. I was diagnosed with a balance disorder and have since taken medical retirement.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank union members for their help and ASLEF for financial assistance from the Hardship Fund. I'd also like to say thanks to all the branches who sent cheques from all around the country. It is very touching that so many branches contributed to a stranger.

But most of all I'd like to say a big thank you to all the lads at Victoria. They've been unbelievably generous with various financial collections for me. You don't realise what fantastic and true friends you have until something like this happens. I look forward to seeing the Vic lads again soon for a drink.

Thanks to you all once again. I really am truly grateful.

Allan Bolter – ex-driver – London Victoria

DIGNITY RESTORED

I HAD an incident for which I suffered the most extreme penalty, Dismissal. A draconian and unjust punishment in the light of similar or worse incidents which were treated far more leniently, taking my wife and I into the depths of gloom and

Change of address form

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Phone.....

Branch.....

Membership No.....

Employer.....

despair for our future.

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to ASLEF and the actions and support of my local reps and colleagues at Southend Victoria and Mick Bradbury who started my defence and gave me support throughout this ordeal.

Andy Morrison, our district organiser, who took my case further giving us hope and saw it through until I was reinstated, I know Andy worked tirelessly on my behalf and to say thanks is such a small word for such a tremendous deed, from our hearts thank you.

To all the others I have not met, including colleagues further afield in our industry, thank you so much for allowing me to regain my dignity and resume my career.

Bob Carlyon – Driver - Southend

WELL DONE DAVE JONES!

I AM writing to commend Mr Dave Jones who is based at Upminster. He helped me regain my job as a train operator after I was victimised and unfairly demoted after my TD1 in 2007. I was told, after 17 years unblemished service, that I was unfit to drive a train. I knew this was deeply unfair and unjust and resolved to fight the decision to demote me to platform duties.

I knew Dave Jones had an outstanding reputation as a union rep and the work he did for me confirmed that he is an exceptional person with great negotiating skills, energy and integrity.

Dave kept me informed throughout the case, showed genuine concern for my wellbeing and ensured that EC member Terry Wilkinson was aware of developments. He discussed everything with me before proceeding so we were clear about how we would approach matters. At a crucial head office meeting he showed exceptional communication skills which we were central to my going onto the training course again, thus allowing me to demonstrate my fitness for the train operator role.

I am now working happily again in the job which means to much to me. I owe a great deal to Mr Jones who is a great advertisement for the virtues of ASLEF as a union. I commend him.

Raj Kalyan – Train Operator – LUL

NATIONAL ORGANISER SAYS THANKS FOR YOUR TRUST

I would like to place on record my thanks to all those who helped and supported me in my successful election to the position of National Organiser. I hope I can repay the trust you have put in me. I know there is a lot to do and the hard work starts now!

I would also like to thank my colleagues Kevin Lindsay and Stuart Armour for a pleasant and good humoured election. Something we can all be proud of.

Simon Weller – National Organiser

LET'S INSIST ON SPEED BOARDS FOR GRIDS

'IT'S NO use crying over spilt milk,' so the saying goes. Well this spilt milk has certainly left a sour taste in my mouth …

After 31 years on the footplate, and the last 25 as a qualified driver, I have now accumulated five points on my licence and find myself a 'Cat C' driver. I suppose I could count myself lucky that I've kept this far clear of the dreaded points system, but I find it hard to accept because in my eyes no 'crime' has been committed.

The alleged 'crime' was my passing over a TPWS grid on the approach to a permanent speed restriction doing 4 mph above what they were set at (even though as drivers we do not know what they are set at!).

What exactly is my 'crime'? I was not speeding before the grid. I'd started to brake before the grid. I wasn't travelling above the permanent speed restriction on entrance into it. So what was the problem?

In my view ASLEF/TOC/FOC should get together and argue the case that all grids should have a speed board at them so we drivers are not approaching them blindfolded. What is the ASLEF stance on this?

Andy Haywood – Driver – Nottingham

DRIVER DOYLE CORRECTED

I WRITE with reference to the article in the 'Company Round-Up' section of the March edition of the Locomotive Journal written by Bro J. Doyle, Virgin Company Council. I'd like to correct what was written.

Point one – the two days extra leave which is referred to does not apply to all drivers at the moment. In fact the extra days are staggered and are dependent on length of qualifying services. So not all drivers are in receipt of 37 annual leave days.

Point two – although the pay deal did allow for the company to 'seek' reciprocal travel arrangements, to date not one company has entered such an agreement.

Point three – Bro Doyle refers to being half-way through the pay deal. This is not the case. The pay deal

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anniversary date was 28 May 2008 so we are less than a year into a four-year deal. In relation to the negotiations, the view of the democratic majority of the Virgin West Coast (VWC) Council is that the Virgin 2008 pay deal has been concluded in full.

Productivity discussions are the prerogative of the management and if they request such discussions, the council will meet to discuss it with them. The majority of the VWC Council is not, and will not, seek productivity discussions. We must also not forget that ASLEF's Executive Committee quite rightly recently rejected management's productivity proposals.

To date the company has not approached the Company Council with any other formal proposals or aspirations for productivity. The Company Council is also aware that in general our drivers do not wish them to enter productivity discussions.

Finally the Council has made no agreement for rules to be computer based at depots.

Bro Doyle's letter generated a large number of enquiries from Virgin West Coast drivers and I hope I have clarified the position. If you have any other questions please attend your branch meeting or speak to your Company Council representative.

A. Macinnes – Secretary – Virgin West Coast Company Council

YOKER BIKER THANKS

I WOULD like to pass on my sincere gratitude to all the ASLEF branches, fellow members and colleagues who recently contributed so generously to an appeal that my branch secretary - Allan Reid of Yoker branch – set up on my behalf.

I am a newly qualified driver but I was involved in a bad motorcycle accident last year and I was subsequently off for over ten months recovering. Thankfully I have made a good recovery and I've been able to return to work.

I would like to say that I was totally overwhelmed by the kind response and support that I received from my fellow ASLEF members. It just goes to show that we stick together and look after each other in difficult times. Thank you all.

(Oh, and can you tell Glasgow Queen Street that I'm staying on the bike!)

Stephen Anderson – Driver – Yoker

HOPE FROM OBAMA

I FELT compelled to write regarding the inauguration of President Obama. His acceptance speech was brilliant and mesmerising.

Such a shame, then, that the man he took over from only the previous week gave out medals to three major cohorts – Blair, Uribe and Howard. These 'medals of honour' he said recognised the part they'd played for democracy, freedom and battle against terror.

No doubt terror exists – but I'm not so sure about the other two.

Perhaps President Obama will do the decent thing and rescind these 'gory glory gongs'. None of these four recognise the trade union movement, they'll all grab money for their memoirs and they'll do a bit of after-dinner speaking for the price of a hospital wing.

So not only is it pleasing to see the first black President of America, this is also a man who can make a change for the better – and not one who will Wag the Dog!

Alan Reid – Secretary – Yoker branch

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PUBLICLY OWNED?

I WAS interested to read the article by Professor Gregor Gall in the March Journal.

This subject came up for discussion at a recent meeting of my local Labour Party in response to a letter from the TSSA asking us to support the campaign to re-nationalise the railways.

Almost everyone in the room made a contribution to the debate. Many waxed lyrical about how wonderful life was under British Rail and ho we should support the campaign.

When the chairman called me to speak, I told the meeting what it was really like to work under BR. We had an industry that was under-funded from its inception. There was no clear view about what size network it wanted to support. The infrastructure and equipment was run down and frankly at times it was complete mayhem.

I informed them that I used to be a branch secretary for 30 years and during all that period I was presiding over cut backs and redundancies. I was personally redundant six times in seven years!

Wages and conditions were depressed due to being in public ownership. I quoted recent figures released by the Office of National Statistics showing train drivers in 1997 took home wages 5% below the national average, while in 2006 they were 6% above the national average.

Many people questioned me about why I was against re-nationalisation. I had to point out that I was not against public ownership – but if this came to pass, we needed a different model from the old BR.

I think that Professor Gall made my point. We need to think carefully where we are going with this campaign.

J.G.Davies – Retired Member – Hereford

MICK BRADBURY – TOP MAN

THE members of Bishops Stortford Branch would like to express their thanks to Mick Bradbury who has left our DCC after 17 years involvement, the last three as Chair.

His dedication and professionalism were much appreciated.

Richard Roscoe Secretary - Bishops Stortford Branch

QUICKER – OR JUST STOPPING LESS?

WHAT a con by Virgin Trains when they claim their high speed West Coast main line saves 30 minutes between London and Glasgow. All they have done is cut out all the stops between Warrington Bank Quay and London Euston in both directions – including Watford, Milton Keynes, Rugby (so why build a new station here?) Nuneaton, Crewe and Motherwell. They've just made half the four hundred miles between Glasgow and London main line 'stopping free'.

I lived at Bletchley for 40 years and had no problem getting anywhere from Milton Keynes, especially coming north.

Milton Keynes was built mostly by Scots and people from the north of England. Many stayed on afterwards, and now it takes them all day to visit families up north.

There's not much benefit in this high speed train unless you stay in London, Warrington, Preston, Carlisle or Glasgow.

H. Connolly – Retired Driver – ex Kings Cross.

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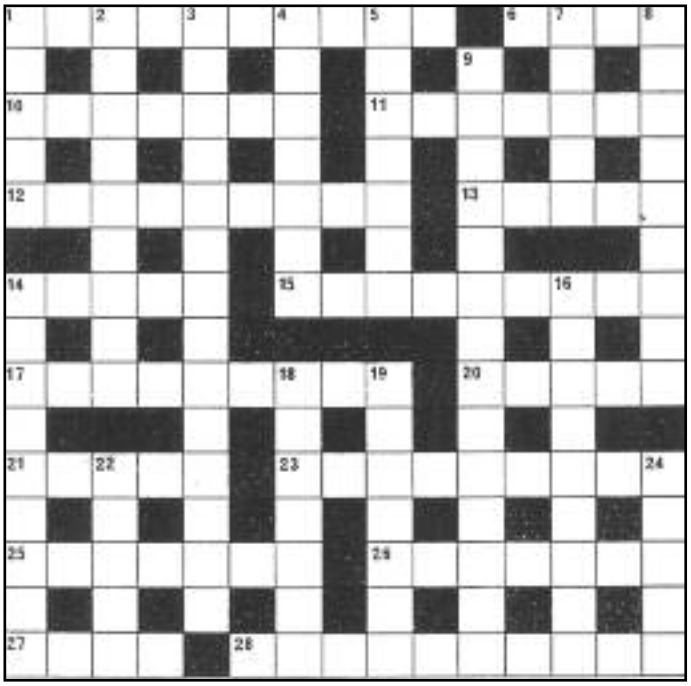
ASLEF *more than just a union*

THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

Prize Crossword No. 37

set by TLC



ACROSS
1 It delivers a blinking message for the crew (6,4)
6 Pay this before boarding the train (4)
10 Imaginary circle around the earth (7)
11 ------- and dearest (7)
12 Becoming more relaxed and mature (9)
13 Decorative head-dress (5)
14 Metal bars found on the track (5)
15 Outdoor hobby for the 'land-owner' (9)
17 One who gives instruction to others via lamp, sound or other method (9)
20 Not a First Class carriage (5)
21 Perfect excuse! (5)
23 Compel or oblige by force (9)
25 He will get you fit – but you may put your foot in it! (7)
26 Worshipping (7)
27 Animal with antlers, - native to Scotland (4)
28 Refusing to give up or let go! (10)

DOWN
1 Not such a familiar sight since diesel trains arrived (5)
2 Exhausting experience (9)
3 When soldiers prepare for combat (6,8)
4 Hanging around surreptitiously (7)
5 In charge of the office or soccer team (7)
7 Sports enclosure (5)
8 Alienated from one's partner (9)
9 Rush-hour commuters face the affray at Waterloo!(6,8)
14 Turned on the ignition again (9)
16 Not original, tending to copy (9)
18 Alfalfa (7)
19 Paved areas used especially for the take-off and landing of aircraft (7)
22 Very cross (5)
24 Time from sunset to sunrise (5)

The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Solution to Crossword No 36 which appeared in the April edition of the ASLEF Journal. Congratulations to **Mark Maloney** from **York**.

ACROSS 3 Traction 8 Trio 9 Marylebone 10 Scam 11 Upon 13 Easel 17 Angels 18 Salads 19 Torso 22 View 24 Arab 25 Accrington 26 Cool 27 Sprinter **DOWN** 1 Track 2 Commuters 4 Rayon 5 Crewe 6 Irons 7 Needless 12 Ouse 14 Allowance 15 Martians 16 Asti 20 Recur 21 Onion 22 Vague 23 Wagon

Thanks for all your responses to the 36th ASLEF crossword in the April edition. If you complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB by the 14th of the issue month.

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Roadside repair	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recovery to home or destination	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recovery to home or destination (Europe)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Car hire/alternative transport cover	✓	✓	✓	✓
Car passenger cover	✓	✓	✓	✓
Premium	£60	£84.95	£120.00	£120.00

Full Comprehensive Cover for only £59

travel

- Instant online quotes
- Instant cover - Simple online buying process
- Extensive Travel Insurance cover options
- Comprehensive Internet Prices
- Comprehensive Cover

- Skydiving
- Annual Multi Trip Travel Insurance
- Adventure Traveller Insurance
- DIY Travel Insurance
- Water Sports Insurance

Instant quote & buy 24 hours a day

www.quotelinedirect.com/goldclub

overseas holiday home

With so many different holiday home insurance policies to choose from, it's often difficult to know where to begin. However with more than 25 years experience, you can be confident that Quotaline Direct can find you the right cover at the right price. Our Holiday Home insurance provides comprehensive cover for all types of overseas properties.

An example of the benefits of cover we can include:

- Cancellation Cover
- Curtailment Cover
- Building Cover
- Flexibility
- Personal Liability
- Legal Expenses
- Theft Cover
- Emergency Travel
- Public Liability
- Accidental Damage

0800 970 9899

to speak with a dedicated consultant

For full details visit www.quotelinedirect.com/goldclub

warranty

Quotaline Direct has teamed up with AA Warranty to offer comprehensive vehicle warranty from just £99 a year. Cover protects against unforeseen mechanical and electrical failure, and includes the cost of repair and replacement of parts.

We offer a choice of two exclusive packages, which you won't find anywhere else on the web.

- Prestige
- Executive

Instant quote & buy 24 hours a day

www.quotelinedirect.com/goldclub

Fantastic value from only £199

uk holiday home

If you own a holiday home you'll know just how frustrating it can be finding insurance cover that's both comprehensive and affordable. However, with Quotaline Direct it feels it doesn't be. We have been protecting insurance for more than 25 years and know the marketplace inside out. Just phone us or fill in the online quotation form and we will find you the right cover at the right price.

An example of the benefits of cover we can include:

- Flexibility
- Comprehensive Contents Cover
- Cancellation/Curtailment Cover
- Alternative Properties
- Personal Liability
- Loss of Rent/Alternative Accommodation
- Public Liability
- Emergency Expenses
- Extra Discounts

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landlord

In business it's important to protect your investments and as a landlord this means making sure that your buy to let property is insured. However, with so many policies to choose from, how can you be sure that you are getting the right cover at the right price? With more than 25 years' industry experience Quotaline Direct is able to negotiate with the country's leading insurers to offer highly competitive insurance packages.

- Damage caused by the tracing of leaks
- We decide exactly what type of policy you need, buildings insurance, contents insurance or a combined policy
- Access to a wide range of specialist policies
- Instant cover
- Choice from a variety of payment schemes

0800 970 9899

to speak with a dedicated consultant

for full details visit www.quotelinedirect.com/goldclub

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